



Lithuanians burn their Soviet army draft cards during a protest in Vilnius. Draft evasion has reached mass proportions in the three Baltic republics.

Gorbachev Rejects Latvian Secession

Associated Press

RIGA, U.S.S.R., May 6 (Sunday)—Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev rejected Latvia's declaration of independence and threatened the Baltic republic with political, economic and administrative measures if it doesn't reverse its course, Tass reported today.

The official Soviet news agency quoted Latvian Communist Party chief Alfreds Rubriks as saying on Latvian television late Saturday that Gorbachev saw no difference between the independence declaration adopted Friday by the Lat-

vian legislature and the secession efforts launched last month by Lithuania. Rubiks spoke by telephone with Gorbachev earlier Saturday, Tass said.

The Latvian lawmakers insisted their path to independence was a gradual one, with a transition period for negotiations with Moscow.

Gorbachev "considers that the declaration . . . on the restoration of independence of the Latvian republic signifies a violation of constitutional norms and is leading toward the breakdown of governmental ties of the republics of the U.S.S.R.," Rubiks said.